

For release
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By Major A.H. Thiessen
Science Service Meteorologist

Weight of the air! The ancients had no idea that gases could be weighed with scales, although an Athenian recognized that it was the weight of the air that raised water in the common pump. The weight of the atmosphere at sea level holds up 29.92 inches of mercury in a barometer, which means a column of water over 33 feet high. At the top of Mount Everest the mercurial column is only 11 inches. In the stratosphere ascent of Captains Stevens and Anderson in the balloon, Explorer II, an elevation of 72,391 feet was attained and the barometer read about 1.24 inches. One hundred cubic feet of air at that height would weigh one-fourth of a pound, while at sea level it would weigh eight pounds.
